

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 176

To improve the job access and reverse commute program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 8, 2009

Mr. FEINGOLD introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To improve the job access and reverse commute program,
and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Job Access and Re-
5 verse Commute Program Improvements Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE PROGRAM.**

7 (a) COMBINED APPLICATIONS.—Section 5316(b) of
8 title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the
9 end the following:

10 “(3) COMBINED APPLICATIONS.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A State may accept a
 2 single combined application for a project that
 3 will use funds provided under not less than two
 4 of the programs described in subparagraph (C).

5 “(B) INCENTIVES.—For any State that de-
 6 termines to accept combined applications under
 7 subparagraph (A), the Secretary may—

8 “(i) reduce the amount of the cost
 9 share required under a program described
 10 in subparagraph (C);

11 “(ii) increase the amount of funds the
 12 State may use for administrative expenses
 13 under a program described in subpara-
 14 graph (C); or

15 “(iii) make a grant to the State for
 16 expenses relating to accepting combined
 17 applications.

18 “(C) PROGRAMS.—The programs described
 19 in this subparagraph are the program under
 20 this section, the elderly and disabled specialized
 21 transit program under section 5310, the new
 22 freedom program under section 5317, and any
 23 other program determined appropriate by the
 24 Secretary.”.

1 (b) JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE FORMULA
 2 GRANTS.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5316 of title 49,
 4 United States Code, is amended—

5 (A) in subsection (a)(1)—

6 (i) in subparagraph (C), by striking
 7 “and” at the end;

8 (ii) in subparagraph (D), by striking
 9 the period at the end and inserting “;
 10 and”; and

11 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-
 12 lowing:

13 “(E) subsidizing the costs associated with
 14 the transportation of low income high school
 15 students and young adults to career or tech-
 16 nical education, job training, or apprenticeship
 17 programs.”;

18 (B) in subsection (h)(2)—

19 (i) by striking “operating assistance
 20 may not” and inserting “operating assist-
 21 ance—

22 “(A) may not”;

23 (ii) by striking the period at the end
 24 and inserting “; or”; and

1 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-
 2 lowing:

3 “(B) may not exceed 80 percent of the net
 4 operating costs of the project, if the State noti-
 5 fies the Secretary that it is necessary to achieve
 6 program goals.”;

7 (C) in subsection (e), by adding at the end
 8 the following:

9 “(4) TRANSFERS TO STATES.—A local govern-
 10 mental authority may transfer to the State in which
 11 the local governmental authority is located any funds
 12 apportioned to the local governmental authority
 13 under this section. A State may use funds trans-
 14 ferred under this paragraph for any eligible job ac-
 15 cess or reverse commute project under this section.”;
 16 and

17 (D) by adding at the end the following:

18 “(j) REPORTING AND CERTIFICATION STREAM-
 19 LINING.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may waive
 21 or streamline reporting and certification require-
 22 ments relating to the program under this section at
 23 the request of a State if the Secretary determines
 24 that the primary goals of the program are still being
 25 met.

1 “(2) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a
2 study of the feasibility of the elimination, revision,
3 or reduced frequency of collection for any reporting
4 or certification requirements relating to the program
5 under this section, particularly examining the bur-
6 den on and needs of nonprofit organizations that re-
7 ceive funding and are unaccustomed to Federal
8 Transit Administration regulations.

9 “(3) FLEXIBILITY.—The Secretary shall en-
10 courage flexibility and experimentation by allowing
11 States to use other assessment and eligibility meas-
12 ures such as outcome based assessment of the trans-
13 portation access improvements to targeted popu-
14 lations instead of documenting individuals either on
15 a State-by-State trial basis or through the pilot pro-
16 gram under subsection (k).

17 “(4) WORKFORCE BOARDS.—The Secretary
18 shall—

19 “(A) encourage coordination and review of
20 applications by local workforce boards; and

21 “(B) consider using workforce board re-
22 views as an alternative to streamline reporting
23 requirements.

24 “(k) PILOT PROGRAM.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may carry
2 out a pilot program to make grants to recipients
3 to—

4 “(A) improve education and employment
5 related transportation for eligible teens and
6 young adults, such as linking high schools to
7 technical colleges, job centers, and apprentice-
8 ships;

9 “(B) evaluate streamlined reporting and
10 certification requirements developed under sub-
11 section (j) in order to determine whether the re-
12 quirements still ensure sufficient accountability
13 and whether the projects are still primarily ad-
14 dressing the goals of this section;

15 “(C) support more comprehensive projects
16 that are integrated with other Federal, State,
17 and local transportation and human service pro-
18 grams while ensuring the paperwork burden is
19 minimized, including—

20 “(i) bundling funds from and allowing
21 combined applications with streamlined re-
22 porting requirements for other programs of
23 the Department of Transportation (such as
24 the elderly and disabled specialized transit
25 program under section 5310 and the new

freedom program under section 5317) or other Federal departments and agencies (such as the Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Education) to address more comprehensive human service transportation needs;

“(ii) developing programs that cross local government boundaries and involve multiple localities, particularly programs that serve more than one of the categories of areas described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of subsection (c)(1); and

“(iii) developing comprehensive projects that integrate workforce development with transportation needs during the different phases of training and job placement.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION.—There shall be available from the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to carry out this subsection.

“(1) CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION OF JARC
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CLEARINGHOUSE.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall con-
2 tinue technical assistance and peer-to-peer network
3 activities being carried out on the date of enactment
4 of this subsection and expand the assistance and ac-
5 tivities as appropriate, so that the Department sup-
6 ports efforts that—

7 “(A) act as an information clearinghouse
8 and information network;

9 “(B) provide technical assistance to poten-
10 tial applicants for a grant under this section;

11 “(C) provide technical assistance to grant
12 recipients in meeting Federal reporting and cer-
13 tification requirements, especially entities such
14 as first-time grant recipients and small non-
15 profit organizations;

16 “(D) conduct outreach and education of
17 employers and employees regarding transpor-
18 tation assistance, including tax benefits for pro-
19 viding fringe benefits and earned income tax
20 credit benefits for employees; and

21 “(E) as appropriate, coordinate the com-
22 bined activities of and support memorandums
23 of understanding between related Federal pro-
24 grams in the Department of Transportation or
25 another Federal department or agency, such as

1 the Department of Labor, the Department of
 2 Housing and Urban Development, the Eco-
 3 nomic Development Agency, or the Department
 4 of Education.

5 “(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
 6 There are authorized to be appropriated \$2,000,000
 7 for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2014 to carry
 8 out expanded technical assistance and peer-to-peer
 9 network activities under this subsection.”.

10 (2) AUTHORIZATION.—Section 5338 of title 49,
 11 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
 12 end the following:

13 “(h) JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE FOR-
 14 MULA GRANTS.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be available
 16 from the Mass Transit Account of the Highway
 17 Trust Fund to carry out section 5316 of this title—

18 “(A) \$185,000,000 for fiscal year 2010;

19 “(B) \$205,000,000 for fiscal year 2011;

20 “(C) \$225,000,000 for fiscal year 2012;

21 “(D) \$245,000,000 for fiscal year 2013;

22 and

23 “(E) \$265,000,000 for fiscal year 2014.

1 “(2) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—Amounts
2 made available by paragraph (1) shall remain avail-
3 able until expended.”.

4 (c) APPLICATION.—Subparagraph (B) of section
5 5316(h)(2) of title 49, United States Code, as added by
6 subsection (b) of this section, shall apply to unexpended
7 amounts made available before, on, or after the date of
8 enactment of this Act.

9 (d) OFFSET.—Any amounts authorized to carry out
10 a project under section 1602 of the Transportation Equity
11 Act for the 21st Century (Public Law 105–178; 112 Stat.
12 256) for which no funds had been obligated as of January
13 1, 2009, are rescinded.

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